GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5263
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AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS
MOHAN RAWALE

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the target fixed for the growth of agricultural exports during 1997-98 and 1998-99;

(b) whether the tragets fixed have been achieved; and

(c) if not, the steps taken to boost agricultural export?

Answer

MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

(SHRI MURASOLI MARAN)

(a) and (b) Performance of the previous year serves as a benchmark target for export of agricultural products. Since international trade in agricultural commodities is dependent on domestic supply matched with international demand, prevailing consumer preferences, traded varieties and quality concerned, targets set are essentially an indication of intent. Total agro exports including tea, coffee, marine, castor oil and cotton during the year 1997-98 were at Rs. 24626.16 crores and during the year 1998-99 were at Rs. 25224.63 crores.

(c) Some of the steps taken to boost export of agricultural products include :-

(i) Providing assistance for raising small and large nurseries for production of good quality planting material, upgradation of technical knowhow of farmers through demonstration, trainings and publicity, rejuvenation of old orchards, area expansion, supply of minikits for vegetables, improving productivity and training of farmers under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Integrated Development of Tropical, Temperate and Arid Zone fruits;

(ii) Grant of financial assistance for improved packaging and strengthening of quality control including adoption of quality systems such as ISO 9000/HACCP at export units;

(iii) Grant of air freight subsidy for export of selected fresh vegetables and fresh fruits;

(iv) Establishment of vapour heat treatment facilities for improving the acceptability of the product especially mangoes in overseas markets. Research efforts are on for the use of modern technologies such as Controlled/Modified Atmosphere technologies in transportation for increasing the shelf life of perishable products such as mangoes and lychees;

(v) Arranging promotional campaigns such as buyer-seller meets and participation in important international fairs and exhibitions;

(vi) Setting up of integrated cargo handling and cold storage facilities at various International Airports for handling export of perishable items such as fresh fruits and vegetables;

(vii) Providing technical advisory services and other support services to trade and industry including training of farmers for export production, quality control, packaging, transport etc.